



The Revolutionary Era 1760–1790

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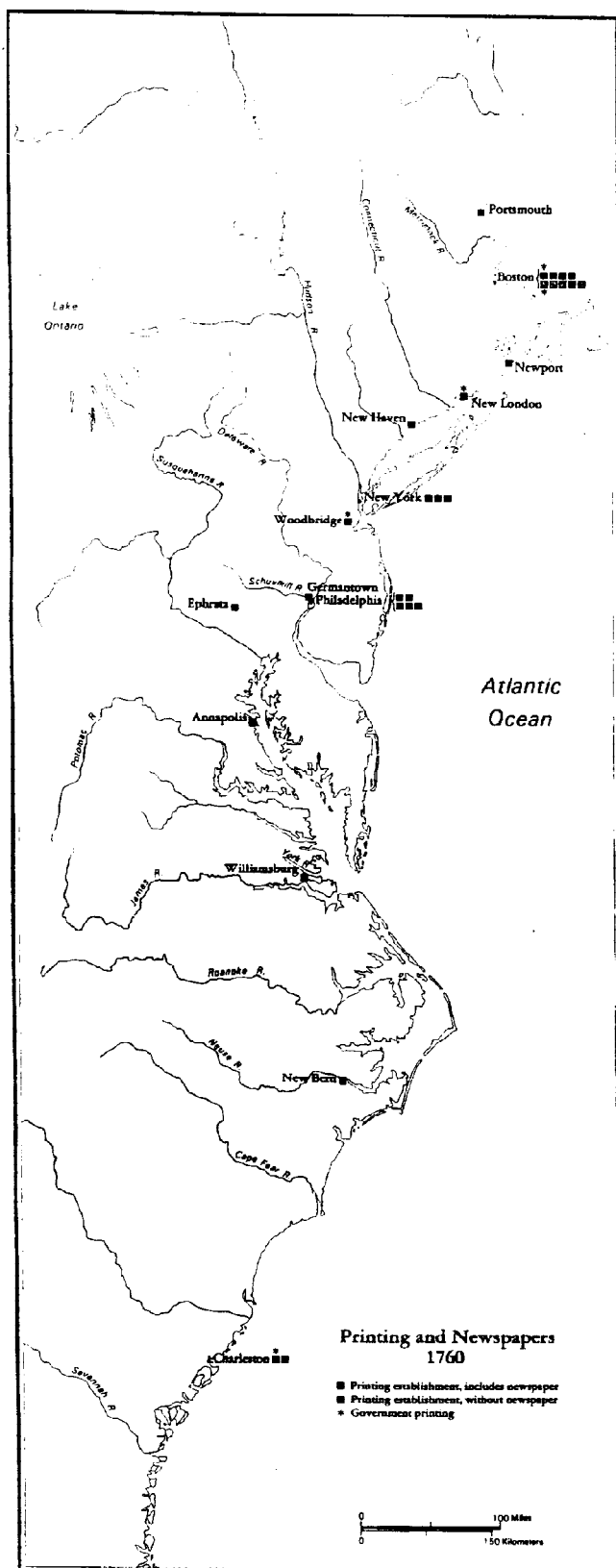
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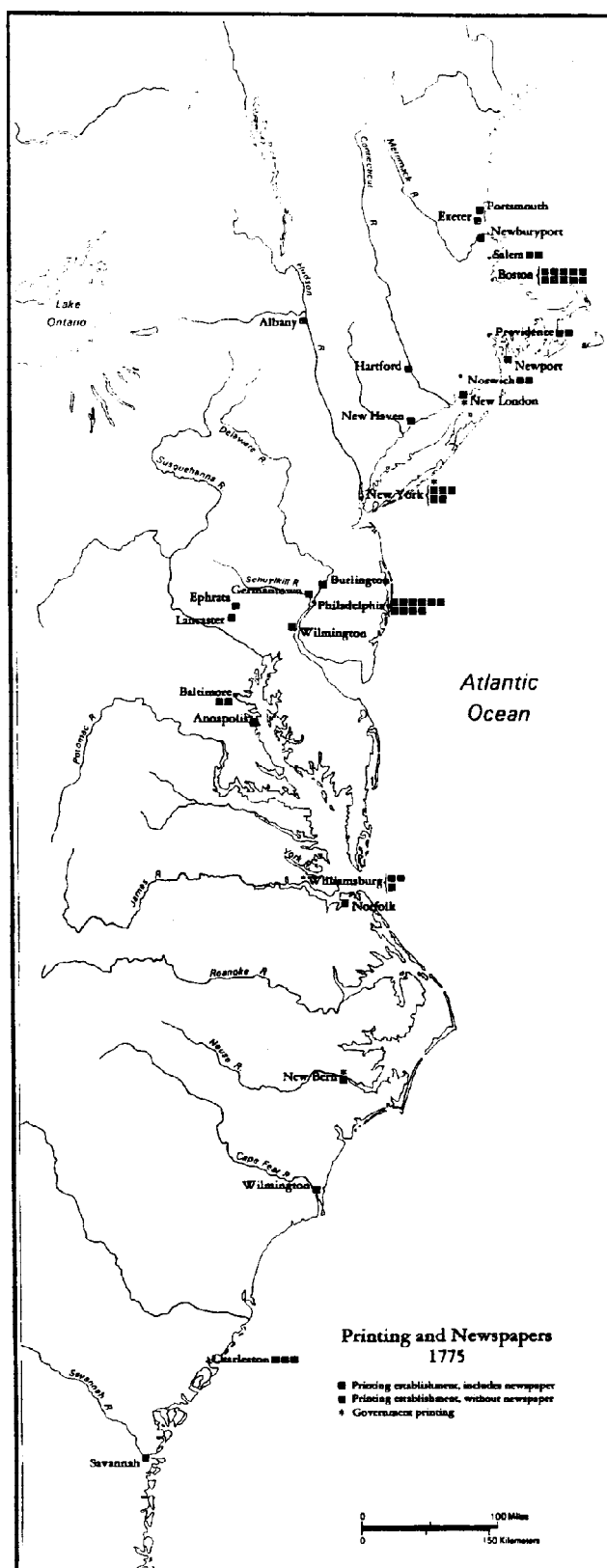
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Cultural Activity



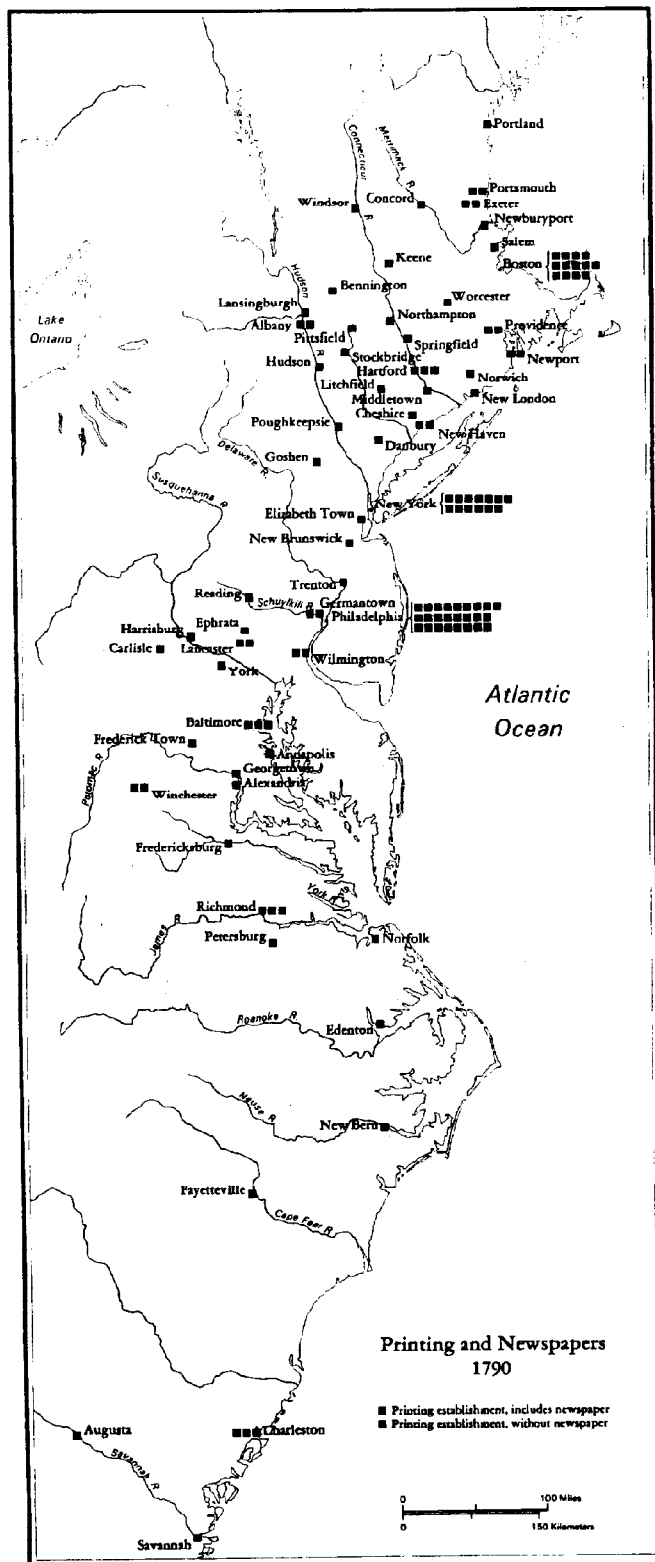
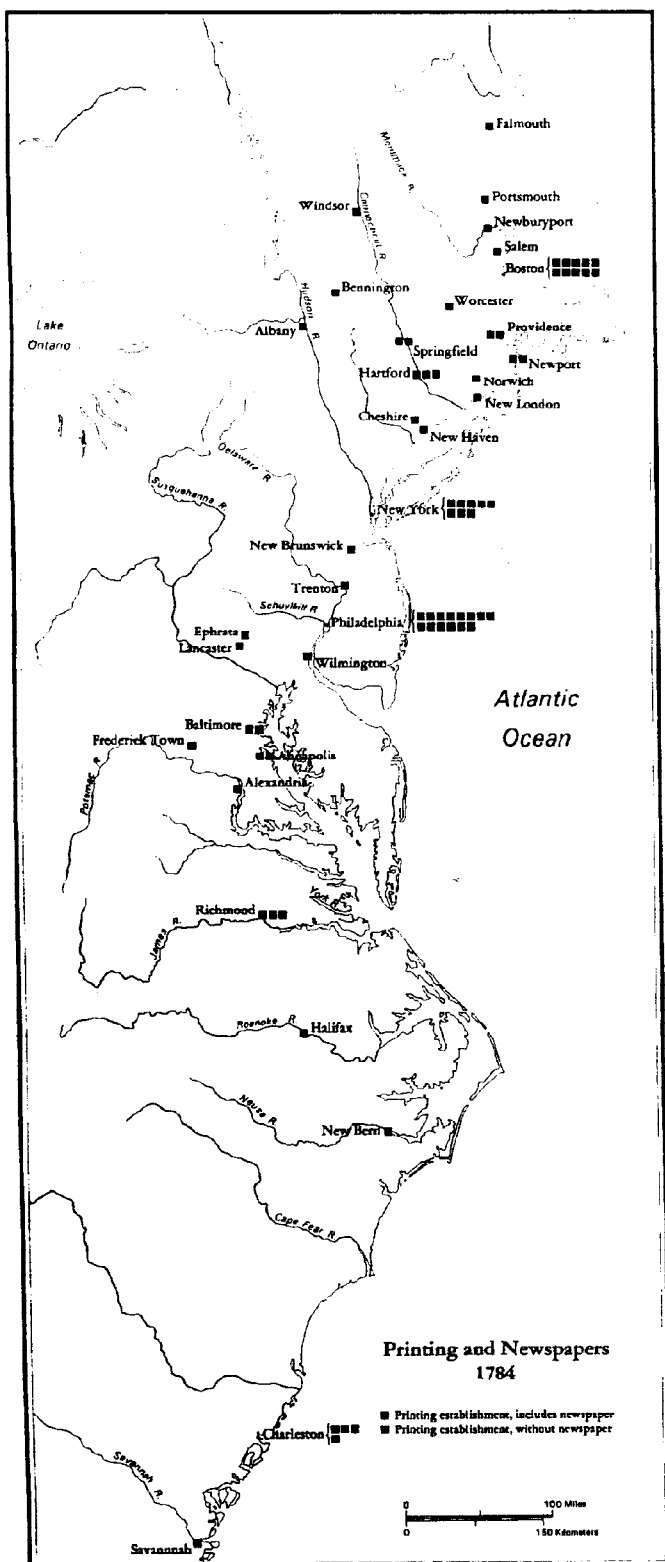
These two maps show the locations of all printing establishments (not individual printers) known to be operating in January of 1760 and 1775, respectively, in the thirteen colonies. Together the maps show the pre-war growth of the printing industry; the second displays the industry's situation before the outbreak of fighting. The war disrupted printing generally, and it is notable that in Massachusetts most establishments ceased operations or relocated shortly



after the battles at Lexington and Concord.

Printing for a colonial government (often an official monopoly) and publishing a newspaper are emphasized because they had long been special, profitable aspects of printing (beyond the usual production of forms, books, etc.) and after 1760 took on added political importance. In 1760 each branch of the Massachusetts government had its own official printer.

Cultural Activity



These maps show the locations of all printing establishments known to be in business in January 1784 and 1790, respectively, in the United States. During the nine years after January 1775 the printing industry grew from 57 establishments distributed among 27 places to 74 establishments spread among 33 places. By 1790 printing and newspaper publication extended as far west as Pittsburgh and Lexington (Ky.), and in January of that year printing was done at 61 places by 127 establishments. Newspaper publication experienced a similar growth from only 36 papers in 1775 to 46 in 1784 and 84 in 1790.

During the Confederation period Philadelphia became the undisputed printing and newspaper capital of the nation. That city's 10 papers (two published in German by Melchior Steiner's establishment) were only three less than for all of New York State, two less than for Massachusetts.

The small map at right, an extension of the map for 1790, shows the western towns having printing establishments and newspapers. The black dots repeat all places on the large map.

